

Accountability & Professional Responsibility

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Objectives

After the session, students should be able to:

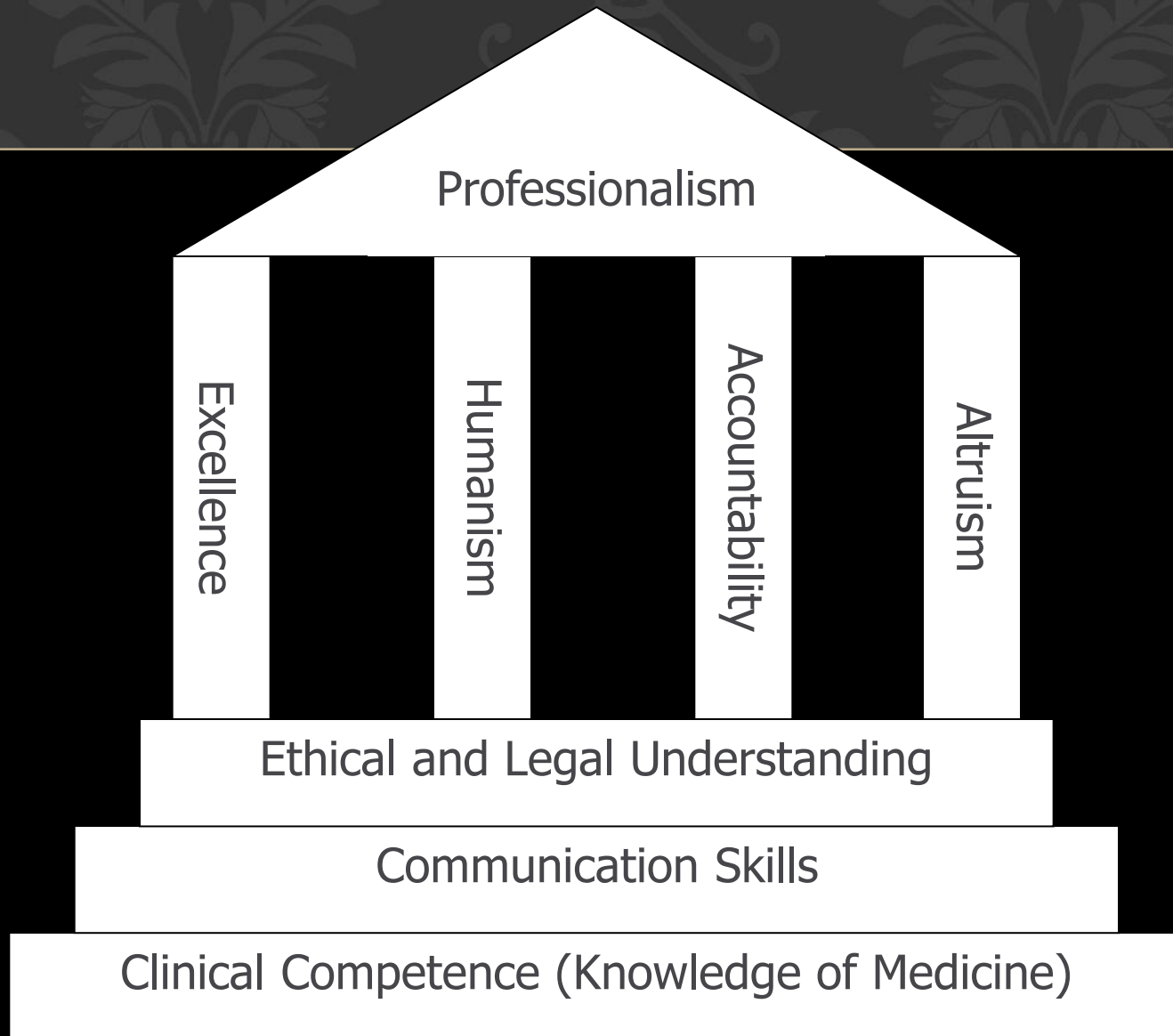
- **Define accountability.**
- Discuss the meaning of accountability in medical professionalism.
- Comment why is accountability needed as a student and as a professional doctor.
- Highlight the key components of accountability.
- Discuss the models of accountability.
- Discuss some practical examples about accountability.
- Take home messages.

RESPONSIBILITY

- A duty or obligation to satisfactorily perform or complete a task (assigned by someone or created by one's own promise or circumstances) that one must fulfill, and which has a consequence or penalty for failure.
- Example: a person who owns his own business is responsible for many tasks but he is not accountable to anyone else.

ACCOUNTABILITY

- It is the obligation of an individual to report formally to his superior about the work he has done to discharge the responsibility
- Example: an employee is responsible for certain task in his job and he is accountable to his supervisor.



Arnold and Stern, 2006

Common elements

- Excellence
- Humanism
- Accountability
- Altruism

Accountability

“procedures and processes by which one party justifies and takes responsibility for its activities”

Responsibility to: patients, families, society

Accountability for: quality care, upholding principles, managing conflicts of interest

Self and professional regulation

BACK TO ACCOUNTABILITY

Definition of Accountability

“...Procedures and processes by which one party justifies and takes responsibility for its activities”

- It comprises responsibilities to patients.
- It comprises patient-physician relationship.
- It comprises responsibilities to colleagues.
- It comprises responsibilities to the profession.
- It comprises responsibilities to the society and public.

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Meanings of accountability

1.

Responsibility: means to become responsible (accountable) to patients, their families, society, community.

To become accountable for quality of care, resolving conflict, and upholding principles.

Meanings of accountability

2.

Self-regulation in activities: This means that physicians' actions and behavior should reflect legal, good ethical conduct, and no financial conflict in their performance.

Meanings of accountability

3.

Standard setting for current and future members of the profession:

Accountability is about our willingness to maintain these professional standards in our day-to-day practices.

Meanings of accountability

4.

Ability to resolve conflict: Conflict might be financial, pharmaceutical. There is a need to disclose any conflict that could damage doctor's accountability.

Meanings of accountability

5.

Free acceptance of duty to serve public: A doctor is accountable for improving the standards of the health care of their community, their country and worldwide.

Meanings of accountability

6.

Explain and give reasons for actions that could have caused harm to the patient, colleagues, and community:

A doctor is accountable for actions that could cause harm.

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Implications for you

As a Student

- You are not accountable for the patients yet -- you are learning the skills associated with professionalism
- **You are personally accountable for your actions or omissions and may be held to account for these by the university or by the law**
- Once qualified you will become professionally accountable

Responsibility Style

- Promise only what can be delivered
Commitment ,delivered on time, accountability
- Support the basic tents of the profession
Develop a philosophy and sound rationale for professional practice
- Think before reacting
Foresee possible outcomes of professional, actions
- Evaluate his/her professional practice
Confront discrepancies between intentions and actions

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Models of Accountability

- The Professional Model
- The Economic Model
- The Political Model
- The Organizational Model
- The Governance Model

The Professional Model

The **physicians and patient participate in shared decision making** and physicians are held accountable to professional colleagues and to patients.

- In medicine, the traditional model of accountability has been the professional model.
- In this model, health care is not a commodity but a professional service.

The Economic Model

- Market is brought to bear in health care and accountability is mediated through consumer choice of providers.
- **Patients are viewed as consumers; physicians and hospitals, as providers or economic producers; and health care, as a commodity or product.**
- Traditionally, government is seen as marketplace regulator ensuring efficient, competitive, and fair operation of the market.

(Emanuel & Emanuel, 1995)

The Organizational Model

Organizational accountability exists when all members of the workforce individually and collectively act to consequentially promote the timely accomplishment of the organization's mission.

- **All members of the workforce:** Executives and managers are responsible for holding their subordinates accountable for the effective and efficient conduct of activities supporting mission achievement. Subordinates, through their actions, set an example by which positive pressure is applied to their peers and seniors for greater accountability.

The Governance Model

There are several different kinds of Governance Models including:

- **Advisory Board Model** - This model emphasizes the helping and supportive role of the Board and frequently occurs where the CEO is the founder of the organization.
- **Patron Model** - Similar to the Advisory Board model, the board of directors in the Patron Model has even less influence over the organization than an advisory board.
- **Co-operative Model** - In this model, all responsibility is shared and there is no Chief Executive Officer. Decision-making is normally by consensus and no individual has power over another.

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PRACTICAL EXAMPLES

Practical Example 1

Dr Jamal Ahmad is a known urology surgeon working in one of the Ministry of Health hospitals. One of his patients has a chronic renal failure and is recommended for a kidney transplantation. Dr Jamal agrees to conduct the operation. Over the next four weeks he works on preparing the patient for the operation. Two days before the operation, Dr Jamal's nurse rang the family and inform them that Dr Jamal is travelling overseas and the operation will be postponed. They will be informed about the time of the operation when Dr Jamal is back in two month.

What do you think about Dr Jamal attitude? Explain your views.

What would you do differently if you were doctor Jamal?

Practical Example 2

Dr Hamdy is a known surgeon. One of his patients has undergone an abdominal surgery. Although the operation was successful several complications occurred postoperatively. Dr Hamdy became unhappy with these outcomes. Instead of helping the patient to recover, he blamed his registrar and the nursing staff for the patient's problems. He became unable to resolve the conflict with the patient. The patient's family also was not happy with these outcomes.

**What do you think about Dr Hamdy's attitude?
What would you do if you were in Dr Hamdy
situation? Explain why**

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Questions

1. How would you define accountability?
2. How are responsibility and accountability related?
3. What are the components of accountability?
4. Which model of accountability should healthcare follow and why?

THANK YOU